

Response: Feint in the East Attack in the West

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Reading Sumanta Banerjee's brilliant expose of *CPI(M)*¹ humbug (*Economic and Political Weekly Issue: March 6*) it struck me that Indira Gandhi has been peculiarly well blessed by proletarian providence with the most convenient communist opponents imaginable. There was a time when she used to protest a lot to prove her anti-imperialism, but it is noteworthy that she no longer does so. Why should she, when she has such helpful enemies?

The pro-Soviet communists are forced to call her anti-imperialist because she is Brezhnev's favourite, The *CPI*² has always said so, and the *CPI(M)*, after some initial spluttering has finally fallen in line — rather oddly, just at the time when the Indian economy is being opened up to imperialist capital without apology, explanation or populist camouflage of the kind Indira Gandhi had effectively employed in the past. But then it is a characteristic of vulgar Marxism that even as it indulges in economic determinism when that is suitable, it is equally capable of ignoring the economic base of politics when that happens to be suitable.

The pro-Deng sections of the communists (a sizeable section of the erstwhile Naxalites) are equally certain that she is anti-US. Since Deng has told them that Soviet social-imperialism constitutes the biggest threat to world peace, *proletarian internationalism* calls for identifying her as the leader of the 'pro-Soviet sections of the ruling class' (whoever these enigmatic gentlemen might be), who are bent on converting India into Soviet neo-colony; only, true to brahminical scholasticism, they are unable to agree on whether the country has already attained, is on the verge of attaining, or is about to soon attain, that state of disgrace. If some of us find these positions as difficult to distinguish as *Advaita* and *Visishtadvaita*, that is no doubt because we are not good enough *Vedantins*. But they are all agreed that this makes her anti-US — *IMF*³ *loan* or *no IMF loan*; indeed, for these peculiar Marxists, (as for the

¹Communist Party of India (Marxist).

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³International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an international financial institution, headquartered in Washington. Its one of arms of Global Capital.

CPI(M) and *CPI*) Indira Gandhi's stand on Kampuchea is more important than the *IMF* loan and all that it implies.

When Indira Gandhi dies (as no doubt even anti-imperialists will) I think the most apt epitaph for her will be: she was anti-imperialist inspite of herself.